



# SNAPSHOT

Volume 19, Number 4

July-August 2004

A PUBLICATION FOR MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES EMPLOYEES.

## Crocker Returns From Middle East

Freedom! A precious gift that most of us take for granted. After returning from the Middle East, Roger Crocker of the Family Health Unit, Division of Community Health, values freedom in a different way. In December 2001, Roger was called to active duty. He and his Special Operations Command Central (SOCENT) unit are based at MacDill Air Force (AF) Base, Central Command Headquarters in Tampa, Florida. In June 2002, he was deployed to Qatar, a small country located on a barren peninsula bordering the Persian Gulf and Saudi Arabia. In November of that year, he returned to MacDill AF Base for a month, then received orders to return to Qatar in January 2003 for a year.

A veteran of Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm, Roger sees each war as a unique challenge. He currently serves as a Noncommissioned Officer in Charge of J2, the Intelligence Directorate, Special Operations Command Central in the Reserves. In layman terms Roger says he is in command of all logistical operations, supply, personnel, food, and equipment for his unit. Because of his position with intelligence, most of what he does is top secret and makes him eligible to get called to duty at any time.

Qatar has some unique aspects both culturally and geographically. Like many Middle Eastern countries,



While serving in Qatar, Sergeant Major Roger Crocker (second from r.) and his unit display freedom by holding the American flag.

it is rich in natural gas, but it is one of the few that continues to have safe ties with the western world. Because of this, Qatar has become fairly modernized. Doha, the capitol of Qatar, has many modern hotels, conveniences, and restaurants. One corner of the city is known as *Cholesterol Corner* because of its many fast food restaurants. With a temperature of 120-130 degrees Fahrenheit during the months of June, July and August, it makes sense to have the world's second largest Dairy Queen located in the

middle of the desert.

"I was so glad to see green vegetation when I returned to the United States," said Roger. "I guess I kind of took it for granted, but realized how beautiful Missouri was when I was overlooking the desert."

About 20 percent of Qataris (Arabs of the Wahhabi sect of Islam) make up the population. The other 80 percent consists of other Arabs, Pakistanis, Indians and Iranians. Even though Arabic is the official language, English is very widely

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## That's So RADICAL!

*A continuation of the series "New Approaches"*

*That's so RADICAL* is the new buzz in the Unit of Health Facility Regulation. Staff member John Langston received high fives when he showed off his new invention designed to help the bureau utilize their time, staff and resources more efficiently. John, the mastermind behind the Regulatory Agency Database: Inspections, Compliance and Licensing (RADICAL), thought outside the box when he created a new database application to improve day-to-day operations within his bureau.

"John has taken us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century," said Shanna Schopp, chief of the Unit of Health Facility Regulation. "Before this new electronic system, we were doing it the old fashion way of paper and pencil, which was not the best way to utilize our resources."

One key element that John designed into the RADICAL database is a centralized scheduling system, or as he calls it "scheduling shepherding" because like a shepherd who corals his sheep, he too corals his flock (of data) into one system.

Shanna adds that this new system has numerous benefits. One benefit is the efficiency of each surveyor's time. With approximately 30 surveyors staffed in all areas of the state, this system allows John to develop a monthly itinerary showing on which teams each surveyor will serve and which facilities they will be surveying. In addition, it allows John to plan ahead better utilizing the surveyors' time by scheduling one trip to the facility instead of having the team make multiple trips as was sometimes happening in the past.

A survey team may be made up of any combination of one or more of the units' professional staff of nurses,



*Discovering ways to use time, staff and resources more efficiently, the Bureau of Health Facility team of Shanna Schopp, John Langston and Terry Wenkel developed a new database called the RADICAL.*

dieticians, sanitarians, medical technologists, and radiological technologists, depending on what type of facility they are surveying and the inspection activities that need to be carried out at that facility. Typical inspection frequencies vary from one to six years, although facilities with frequent complaints may be visited multiple times between routine surveys. This new system helps Shanna and her staff track when and how often each facility is required to be surveyed.

Facilities that fall under the bureau's umbrella include hospitals, birthing centers, ESRD clinics, rural health clinics, laboratories, radiology service providers, ambulatory surgical centers and hospital-based skilled nursing facilities.

Timing was everything, according to Shanna. The unit has seen a rise in the number of complaints by consumers regarding care and service at regulated facilities. In fiscal year 2003 the bureau received

587 complaints. This year they expect this number to jump close to 700. Reasons for the increase depend on a number of factors, including nursing shortages, media attention, HIPAA regulations, and reports from protection and advocacy groups.

"Because of the time we are saving with this new system, we are able to focus on the increased number of complaints," said Shanna. "Without this, I am not sure how we could have handled the increase."



## Intranet vs. Internet

The intranet can be a shortcut to valuable information when targeting Department of Health and Senior Services' employees. Information for training, policies and procedures, employment opportunities, forms and even how to order office supplies can all be found on the intranet. In addition, it can be a great shortcut to department web pages and a quick resource in locating audiovisual and literature items stored in the department's warehouse.

A new icon that has been added to the intranet is *Face-to-Face with Employees*. This page consists of pictures of employees interacting in department activities. A new activity is the Director's Ice-Cream Social, where different employees each month get together for a treat of ice-cream and cake. It is a great opportunity to meet other co-workers and a chance to visit with Dick Dunn and Ron Cates about issues relating to the department.

The internet can also be a valuable resource, but targets a much broader audience. Many employees have been involved with the revamping of the department's web site. This new design will take on a new unified look and a more user-friendly navigational path. One icon that will be added to help users find the information they are researching is *Topics A-Z*. Frequently Asked Questions are also an option that can be displayed on each page to help users find quick answers to their questions. Because the internet's main purpose is to serve the general public, information should be written in a way that can be easily understood and located.

When designing information to be uploaded for either the internet or intranet, keep in mind your target audience. You will have better satisfied customers!

## Staff Highlights



*We have come a long way since the days of Lewis and Clark when bear grease was used to protect against mosquitos. Bryan Norman (l.), of the Division of Environmental Health and Communicable Disease Prevention, portrayed Captain William Clark during the re-enactment of the Lewis and Clark Expedition that took place across Missouri. As part of this commemoration, EHCDP has developed a Lewis and Clark - West Nile virus themed public health campaign to illustrate how these brave explorers protected themselves against insects, and how Missourians can protect themselves today.*



*The 2004 Governor's Torch of Excellence, Silver Award was awarded to the department for its profound commitment to diversity. Accepting the award is Mary Hoskins (l.), Office of Personnel. First Lady, Lori Houser-Holden and Jackie White, commissioner of the Office of Administration are also pictured.*



## Employees of the Month



(l. to r., seated) Paula Kempf and Connie Rackers; (l. to r., standing) Cindy Blair and Wanda Roling

**Wanda Roling**, Health and Senior Services Manager; **Connie Rackers**, Health Facilities Nursing Consultant; **Cindy Blair**, Administrative Office Support Assistant; and **Paula Kempf**, Manager Emergency Medical Services Unit - Bureau of Healthcare Oversight were recognized as the June Employees of the Month.

These employees were instrumental in obtaining an Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMS-C) Partnership Grant for the department. Missouri does not currently have a fully integrated and formalized EMS-C program within our current EMS system. The grant will help the unit to reach its primary goal of reducing child and youth morbidity and mortality resulting from trauma. Based on the proposal prepared by these employees, the Unit of EMS will receive \$115,000 from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration Grant for each budget year from March 1, 2004, through February 28, 2008.



**Patty Wilbers**

**Patty Wilbers**, Senior Auditor in the Older American Act Unit, Bureau of Senior Services, was honored as the July Employee of the Month.

Patty works with the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) on numerous projects including a recent review of how federal census data interacts with the formula whereby funds are distributed to the 10 AAAs in Missouri. The AAAs develop and implement programs and services for older persons at the local level.

In her 17 years of working with the AAA network, Patty continues to look for new and better ways to help the AAAs serve the needs of the aging population in Missouri.

Patty and her husband Michael have two daughters, Jamie age 6, and Kristen age 4. She is an active member of Concord Baptist Church, where she teaches Sunday School and Vacation Bible School. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, scrapbooking, and home improvement projects.

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spoken. This made it easier for Roger and his unit to communicate with the locals. Because of safety reasons and the extremely hot weather, Roger and his unit were encouraged not to stray too far from base, but when a situation arose when he had to travel into the city, he found the locals to be friendly and cooperative.

After his return from Qatar, Roger found many changes at DHSS. His division tripled in size and changed from the Division of Maternal Child and Family Health to the Division of Community Health. His position had also changed from being manager of the Disabilities Program for Disabilities Prevention and Injury Control to manager of the SAFE KIDS Program. In addition, Roger also saw many new faces due to the early retirement incentive.

Now that Roger is back into his normal daily activities, he says he is glad to be home where he can do the things he likes to do best, which include golfing, fishing and visiting with his two sons.



The *DHSS Snapshot* is published bimonthly by the Office of Public Information. Suggestions for future articles can be sent to [buchal@dhss.mo.gov](mailto:buchal@dhss.mo.gov) phone: 573/751-606 fax: 573/751-6041

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